

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of manufacturing an engine cowling for an outboard engine that has a lower motor cover and an upper motor cover with a top cap, the method comprising the steps of:

selecting an engine with a particular starter;

surrounding at least a portion of the outboard engine with a lower motor cover;

selecting an upper motor cover;

selecting a top cap from a plurality of top caps, each formed with an identical lower edge and being designed to accommodate the particular starter of the engine;

securing the selected top cap to the upper motor cover by attaching the lower edge of the top cap to an upper edge of the upper motor cover; and

mounting the selected upper motor cover on the lower motor cover by mating a lower edge of the upper motor cover with an upper edge of the lower motor cover.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of securing the upper motor cover to the lower motor cover by latching the lower motor cover on the upper motor cover.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of selecting an engine size.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the upper motor cover is selected from a plurality of upper motor covers each formed with an identical upper edge and an identical lower edge.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of upper motor covers includes an upper motor cover to accommodate a two-cylinder engine and an upper motor cover to accommodate a three-cylinder engine.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the starter is one of an electric starter and a manual pull starter.
7. An engine cowling, comprising:
  - an upper motor cover having an upper edge;
  - a top cap selected from a family of top caps, each with a different configuration; and
  - wherein each top cap of the family has a lower edge configured to mate with the upper edge of the upper motor cover.
8. The engine cowling of claim 7, further comprising:
  - a lower motor cover having an upper edge;
  - wherein the upper motor cover is selected from a family of upper motor covers, each with a different configuration; and
  - each upper motor cover of the family having a lower edge configured to mate with the upper edge of the lower motor cover.
9. The engine cowling of claim 7, wherein:
  - the family of top cap includes at least two top caps, the different configuration selected from the group comprising electric starter and manual pull starter.